

VZCZCXRO0885
RR RUEHHM
DE RUEHHI #2113 3620859
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 280859Z DEC 07
FM AMEMBASSY HANOI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6930
INFO RUEHHM/AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH 4103
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 6108
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//USDP/ISA/AP/ES//
RHMFIUU/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI//J00/J005/J006/J01LA/J06/J5//
RHEHNSC/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS HANOI 002113

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MLS, EAP/EP, EAP/RSP, EAP/PD, OES/PCI
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR ANE, G/ENV
STATE PASS TO EPA/OIA (DENNIS CUNNINGHAM AND MARK KASMAN)
STATE PASS TO EPA/ORD (KEVIN TEICHMAN)
HHS/OSSI/DSI PASS TO OGHA (WSTIEGER/MLVALDEZ/CHICKEY), NIH: FIC
(RGLASS) AND NIEHS
CDC FOR OGHA (SBLOUT/KMCCALL), NCEH (TSINKS/MHSWEENEY)
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (TSHUBERT AND WVAN HOUTEN)
BANGKOK PASS TO RDM/A (OCARDUNER AND JPASCH)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [SENV](#) [TBIO](#) [KPAO](#) [VM](#)

SUBJECT: MORE POTENTIAL PARTNERS FOR AGENT ORANGE/DIOXIN REMEDIATION

Ref: A. Hanoi 2053 B. Hanoi 2009

¶1. (SBU) Summary. U.S. engagement continues to catalyze other donors to participate in dioxin remediation and related health projects. The Government of Vietnam (GVN) also continues to move forward on its clean up projects. At the same time, donors and the GVN are waiting for the United States to take the next steps in implementing the recently appropriated USD 3 million for "dioxin mitigation and health activities" in Vietnam. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Over the past month, ESTHOffs learned that UNDP and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) relied upon reports of increased U.S. engagement on the issue of Agent Orange/dioxin to decide to increase potential funding of dioxin-related projects in Vietnam (ref B). Subsequently, Caroline den Hulk, Communications Director of UNICEF Vietnam, confirmed that the Ford Foundation had provided USD 688,000 to the U.S. Fund for UNICEF to build institutional capacity to treat child disabilities, starting in Danang. Carol Stein, Chairwoman of the U.S. Fund for UNICEF, plans to visit Vietnam in late January with the Ford Foundation and Aspen Institute funded U.S-Vietnam Dialogue Group and expects to return with her board in March 2008 to review dioxin-related projects. Dr. Charles Bailey, Director of Ford Foundation's Special Initiative on Agent Orange/Dioxin, confirmed to the Ambassador that the Atlantic Philanthropies and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation are considering support for population health systems, including a dioxin diagnostic laboratory and livelihood support for people living with disabilities.

¶3. (SBU) Representatives from the Czech Republic detailed to ESTHOffs their dioxin-related efforts, which include ecological sampling and analysis at a pilot site in Thua Tien-Hue Province. With the approval and guidance from the GVN's Office 33, the national coordinating body for international cooperation on the Agent Orange/dioxin issue, the Czechs began work in 2006 and have since spent over USD 500,000 to collect soil and animal blood samples to test for dioxin exposure. The Czechs, who developed dioxin remediation expertise cleaning up domestic contamination, plan to spend an additional USD 500,000 over the next few years and would like to work with the United States and other donors on remediation activities as part of their "normal" development

assistance.

¶4. (SBU) We have also heard that other donors are looking to get involved. Martin Naprstek of the Czech Development Centre told ESTHOffs that Germany and Austria were considering engagement now that the United States and other donors had initiated cooperative efforts with the Vietnamese. William Paterson, lead infrastructure specialist at the World Bank office in Hanoi, told ESTHOff that World Bank might have infrastructure financing for public waterworks to support full dioxin remediation in Danang. The Dean of the Hanoi School of Public Health later told HHS Health Attache that MOH officials are dusting off old proposals and discussing ways to engage on dioxin-related health issues with various donors.

¶5. (SBU) At the same time, GVN officials are anxious for the United States to begin to implement the USD 3 million in ESF funds for dioxin mitigation appropriated earlier this year. In a December 6 meeting with Ambassador Michalak on climate change issues (ref A), Minister of Natural Resources and the Environment (MONRE) Nguyen Khoi Pham also raised the issue of dioxin, one of two issues that he said weigh the most heavily upon him (coordinating Vietnam's national action plan to respond to climate change being the other). Earlier, MONRE's Office 33 Director General Dr. Le Ke Son expressed to ESTHOff his disappointment at the perceived lack of movement by the United States and noted that he is under increasing pressure from his superiors and the Vietnamese press to explain why the United States has yet to disburse the funds. Son noted that the GVN had already begun independent remediation efforts, had worked to remove obstacles to international assistance, and was willing to supplement the U.S. funding, which would serve as a catalyst for other donor participation.

MICHALAK